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INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 000259

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019-03-30
TAGS: PREL SY MU
SUBJECT: SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASSAD TO VISIT OMAN IN APRIL

CLASSIFIED BY: Gary A. Grappo, Ambassador, U.S. Department of State,
U.S. Embassy - Muscat; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (U) This is an Action Request. Please see paragraph 3.

¶2. (C) During a meeting on March 29, Dr. Omar al-Zawawi, Special Advisor to Sultan Qaboos on External Affairs, informed the Ambassador that the Sultan planned to host a visit by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to Muscat in early April. Zawawi stated that Oman "wants to be helpful" during Assad's visit and, therefore, sought guidance on the latest U.S. thinking regarding Syria, including major points that the U.S. wished to communicate to Syrian officials. Among the issues Zawawi mentioned were the transit of foreign fighters through Syria, Israel-Syria negotiations, Syria's role in the peace process, and the UN Hariri tribunal. Zawawi made clear, however, that Oman was not seeking to play a direct intermediary role between Washington and Damascus.

¶3. (C) Action Request: Post asks that the Department provide, by April 2, information responsive to Zawawi's request, including points for possible delivery by Omani officials to Assad and his delegation. End Action Request.

GRAPPO